

## THANK YOU AND FAREWELL

Thank you for taking the time to read the thirty-first and final edition of the Alpine Community Recovery Newsletter.

This newsletter began in May 2020 as a joint initiative by Alpine Shire Council and Bushfire Recovery Victoria. Over the past two years and eight months, the newsletter has documented Bushfire Recovery Victoria's role in emergency recovery, including its funding and delivery of the Local Economic Recovery grants and its transition to a permanent government agency now known as Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV).

The newsletter also shared the journey and accomplishments of the Alpine Community Recovery Committee (CRC), becoming a joint publication with Alpine Chat from October 2020 – June 2022 and giving the Alpine CRC a voice to share updates and information with our wider Alpine communities.

The newsletter charted the many grant opportunities available to residents of the Alpine Shire and Resorts and celebrated what has been funded. As of June 2022, \$2.39m was received across the Alpine Shire through funding administered by ERV and projects in the Alpine region worth \$10.18m were supported through the Black Summer Recovery Grants program administered by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

Additionally, 17 community facilities across the Alpine Shire received upgrades to the total value of \$482,527 through the ERV Community Facilities Grant.

The newsletter emphasised the importance of wellbeing supports and highlighted a range of services available across North East Victoria. To find a vast majority of these supports in one place, we highly encourage you to visit Navspace, an online guide to wellbeing services available in the Alpine region. Access Navspace by visiting [navspace.org.au](https://navspace.org.au).

We thank you for continually taking the time each month to read, open, or share the Alpine Community Recovery Newsletter.

While the Alpine Community Recovery Newsletter comes to an end, the work of bushfire recovery continues and will be shared online by Alpine Shire Council through their Facebook page and website.

We would love to hear what you thought about the Alpine Community Recovery Newsletter. If you have a spare few minutes, we invite you to fill out a short survey so that we can continue to improve how we communicate into the future.

Access the survey by visiting [bit.ly/3vfJgcZ](https://bit.ly/3vfJgcZ).



**Pictured** (L-R): Alpine CRC members Fiona Nicholls, Steve Belli, and Fiona Laird at the Beyond the Fire: Resilience screening in Albury

## Documenting Recovery

**Beyond the Fire** is a television documentary series developed by CheekyMac Productions that shares a multifaceted view of the Black Summer Bushfires across Australia.

Each episode journeys through fire affected locations, connecting with local heroes to share stories of survival, tragedy, and hope.

The Beyond the Fire: Resilience episode focuses on Alpine and Towong Shires and includes some of our locals who devoted so much time towards bushfire recovery.

This episode will be airing on 10Play in January 2023. All previous episodes are available to watch on 10Play.

For more information about Beyond the Fire, visit **[beyondthefire.tv](https://beyondthefire.tv)**.

## Bushfires in times of storms and floods

Victoria's regions have been hit hard with extreme wet weather and flooding.

In spite of this, conditions can change quickly.

As we come into the summer season, it is important to continue preparing for bushfire.

Taking steps to get prepared before the fire season means you know what to do when you're at risk of fire. Recognising and understanding your level of risk will help you to better know what to expect so that you can start preparing your property to minimise impact.

While it's important to prepare your property for fire, you also need to plan and prepare for your safety. Developing a personal emergency plan and packing essentials, such as important documents, woolen blankets, medications, clothing, and photos, means that you can leave easily before a fire starts.

If you're travelling, check the Fire Danger Ratings for your destination before you go, listen to local radio for warnings and advice while you're on the road, and check conditions regularly throughout your stay.

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) has a number of resources available online that will help you to plan and prepare by:

- Assessing your level of risk
- Providing information and advice specific to your local area
- Preparing you for action before and during a fire
- Teaching you how to best prepare your property
- Giving advice regarding how to prevent fires in your home
- Providing information about structural fire safety for your home and business

Leaving early is the safest option. Be prepared this summer by visiting [cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare](https://cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare).

## National Fire Danger Rating System

The **Australian Fire Danger Rating System** (AFDRS) is a scale that tells you how dangerous and unpredictable a fire can be, should it start.

On 1 September 2022, fire danger ratings changed across Australia. Whereas before it differed between states and territories, it is now consistent across the country. This means that, wherever you go in Australia, you can understand the level of threat and what you need to do to stay safe.

The AFDRS has four rating levels, each with a message that informs you what to do in times of bushfire risk.

**MODERATE** Plan and prepare

**HIGH** Prepare to act

**EXTREME** Take action now to protect your life and property

**CATASTROPHIC** For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas

Find out more about the AFDRS by visiting [afdrs.com.au](https://afdrs.com.au).

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

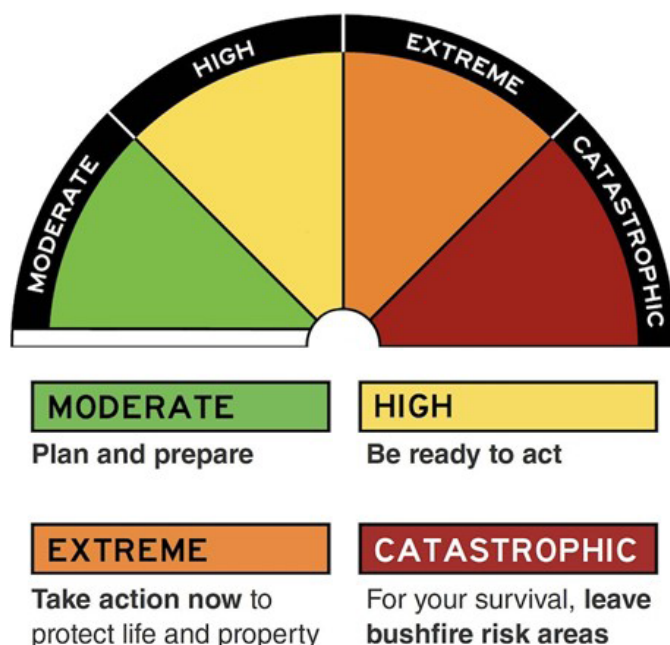
In 2022, two members of the Alpine Community Recovery Committee (CRC) were presented with the opportunity to engage with the annual Alpine Valleys Community Leadership Program (AVCLP), sponsored by the Alpine CRC and Emergency Recovery Victoria.

The vision of the AVCLP is to develop vibrant and sustainable communities through local leadership, with a mission to grow the leadership capacity and voice of people and communities. During the time of the program, participants met with a wide-ranging number of leaders in varying fields of leadership, ranging from community-based organisations and private enterprises through to local, state, and federal governments.

Council is excited to announce that, together with Alpine Valleys Community Leadership and Susan Benedyka, members of our Alpine communities will be given the opportunity in 2023 to take part in a condensed leadership program. This opportunity will encourage individuals to build on their skills as leaders and contribute to community resilience in the face of emergency events.

This program will provide participants with a stronger understanding of community-led recovery, and how effective governance and project management skills can contribute to engaging proactive and productive teams. Participants will learn how to build and maintain networks and how to strategically adapt to climate change.

This opportunity will be advertised broadly in 2023. Keep an eye on Council's Facebook page to learn more and apply: [facebook.com/alpineshirecouncil](https://facebook.com/alpineshirecouncil)



## Funding opportunities

**Australian Government Disaster Recovery Allowance** | Short term payments to support eligible people in the Alpine Shire and Falls Creek who have lost income as a direct result of the Bogong Landslide and Victoria Floods starting in October 2022. Closes 18 May 2023. Visit [servicesaustralia.gov.au/victorian-floods-october-2022-disaster-recovery-allowance](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/victorian-floods-october-2022-disaster-recovery-allowance).

**Victorian Government Small Business Immediate Flood Relief Program** | Eligible businesses are able to apply for one-off grants of \$5,000 to cover immediate expenses as a result of significant damage to their place of business, business assets, stock, or equipment. Closes 13 January 2023 or earlier if funds are exhausted. Visit [business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/small-business-immediate-flood-relief-program](https://business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/small-business-immediate-flood-relief-program).

**Victorian Primary Producer Flood Recovery Package** | Eligible primary producers in the Alpine Shire and Falls Creek are able to apply for a variety of funding opportunities to support clean-up, relief, and recovery efforts. Visit [ruralfinance.com.au/industry-programs/victorian-primary-producer-flood-recovery-package](https://ruralfinance.com.au/industry-programs/victorian-primary-producer-flood-recovery-package) or contact Rural Finance on **1800 260 425**.

- > **Victorian Primary Producer Flood Recovery Grants** | Up to \$75,000
- > **Victorian Rural Landholder Grants** | Up to \$25,000
- > **Victorian Primary Producer Flood Recovery Transport Support Program** | Claim 50% of transport costs up to \$15,000
- > **Victorian Primary Producer Flood Recovery Concessional Loans** | Up to \$250,000

**FRRR Strengthening Rural Communities - Prepare and Recover** | Grants up to \$25,000 are available for a broad range of initiatives. Round 16 closes 1 March 2023. Visit [frrr.org.au/funding/place/src-prepare-recover](https://frrr.org.au/funding/place/src-prepare-recover) or contact Vivienne McCrory on **1800 170 020** or [info@frrr.org.au](mailto:info@frrr.org.au).

**FRRR Strengthening Rural Communities - Small and Vital** | Grants up to \$10,000 are available for a broad range of community-led initiatives. Round 16 closes 1 March 2023. Visit [frrr.org.au/funding/place/src-small-vital](https://frrr.org.au/funding/place/src-small-vital) or contact Vivienne McCrory on **1800 170 020** or [info@frrr.org.au](mailto:info@frrr.org.au).

**Power Saving Bonus for Victorian Households** | Victorian residential energy account holders are eligible for a \$250 Power Saving Bonus. Find out if you are eligible to apply by visiting [compare.energy.vic.gov.au](https://compare.energy.vic.gov.au).

**Victorian Government Solar for Business Program** | Rebates of up to 50% of the total cost are available for small businesses in Victoria to install approved small-scale solar systems up to 30kW. Find out if you are eligible for a rebate value of up to \$3,500 by visiting [solar.vic.gov.au/site-4/solar-small-business](https://solar.vic.gov.au/site-4/solar-small-business).

**Visit Victoria Regional Events Fund** | Regional communities are invited to apply for funding opportunities that support the acquisition, growth, or planning of events across regional areas. Visit [corporate.visitvictoria.com/events/regional-events](https://corporate.visitvictoria.com/events/regional-events) or contact Tourism North East on **03 5728 2773**.

**Indi Funding Finder** | The Federal Member for Indi has comprehensive information on grants available on their website, including how to apply for grants and upcoming opportunities in the region. For more information, visit [helenhaines.grantguru.com.au](https://helenhaines.grantguru.com.au).

## PREPARING FOR NEXT TIME

Knowing where to find accurate and up-to-date information is vital in an emergency.

The Alpine Shire has a number of telecommunications black spots, which impact how our communities are able to give and receive information during an emergency.

The Alpine CRC addressed this ongoing issue in the progress review of their Community Recovery Plan and encourages continued advocacy to support our communities.

Council has developed a Mobile and Internet Strategy that identifies black spots and other gaps and appropriate solutions to address these issues. The Strategy was noted by Council in the December 2022 Council Meeting as an advocacy document and will be used to encourage action to improve coverage and source the best possible solutions to provide connectivity across the Alpine Shire.

As part of the Australian Government Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) package, NBN Co installed Disaster Satellite Services in nine locations across the Alpine Shire.

These Disaster Satellite Services provide increased bandwidth during an emergency event to ensure that our communities can stay connected and can be found at the following sites:

- > Ovens DELWP Office
- > Myrtleford Senior Citizens Centre
- > Myrtleford Sports Stadium
- > Dinner Plain Community Centre
- > Pioneer Park and The Pavilion, Bright
- > Harrietville Community Hall
- > Mount Beauty Community Centre
- > Mount Beauty Swimming Pool and Sports Stadium
- > Dederang Memorial Hall

Find out more about how this issue is being addressed at a federal level and the work of the Federal Member for Indi by visiting [helenhaines.org/issues/phone-and-internet](https://helenhaines.org/issues/phone-and-internet).

Gain independent advice by visiting the Regional Tech Hub, an initiative of the Australian Government that provides advice and support to regional Australians negotiating confusing phone and internet issues. The Regional Tech Hub can be found by visiting [regionaltechhub.org.au](https://regionaltechhub.org.au).

